EXIT INTERVIEW OF COUNSELING AND TESTING CENTER: BASIS FOR CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

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Abstract

Exit surveys/interviews of university graduating students have been used to evaluate academic programs. It is the belief of the researcher that developing and implementing an exit survey/interview plan stimulate and improve ongoing feedback for department program assessment. This paper assessed the perceptions of graduating students on the academic services of LPU in terms of appropriateness of the curriculum, teachers' capability, knowledge, skills and values earned, utilization of the knowledge, skills and values, College Dean's assistance and Sufficiency of practical experiences. It also aimed to determine the level of satisfaction of the graduating students on the services and support given by Academic and Non-Academic department.

The respondents of the study composed 50 percent of the total population of 5,716 graduating students from 2008 to 2012. The Counseling and Testing Center (CATC) of Lyceum of the Philippines University Batangas conducted exit surveys to all graduating seniors as part of the annual assessment activities. All data is based on a standardized form, FM-LPU-VPAR-16/05, which is filled out by the graduating students. The form is quantitative in nature, where information such as date of graduation and course are recorded.

Results showed that the graduating students confirmed that they have utilized their knowledge, skills and values during the practice of their chosen career. The college provides applicable curriculum and they received enough support from their deans and respective teachers that equipped with necessary skills, knowledge and values. The results of Non-academic satisfaction prove that the graduating students trust that the university keeps their records confidentially and manage their accounts effectively.

Keywords: Exit Interview, Counselling, Academic Services

INTRODUCTION

Many professional accreditation associations require that academic institutions use a variety of assessment instruments to measure student and program achievements. Professional schools and colleges face increasing pressures from accreditation agencies and other peer agencies to change academic programs to better coordinate national curricular requirements. Information derived from these assessments allows these associations, departments, and faculty to compare and contrast academic strengths and weaknesses of various programs, schools, and colleges. Even though much of the assessment data is gathered to meet externally prescribed specifications, it is possible for academic units facing these externally driven pressures to use existing assessment techniques and results for internal program improvements. At many universities, a number of departments and colleges undergo periodic accreditation reviews and use these as an ongoing source of assessment data. The universities are required to use national outcomes assessment methods to assess student learning and program success.

Student surveys and exit interviews have been identified by various schools, colleges, and departments as useful instruments at the outset of assessment programming for assessing student achievement and satisfaction. Questioning students during and near completion of academic programs about the strengths and weaknesses of the program can provide essential feedback for making curricular enhancements and recognizing program problems.

An organization can use the results from exit interviews to reduce student turnover and increase productivity and engagement. Some examples of the value of conducting exit interviews include improving innovation and sustaining performance. It is important for each organization to customize its own exit interview in order to maintain the highest levels of survey validity and reliability. It is further suggested by interview theorists that a person-to-person interview often negatively affects the results of those interviews (Phillips & Connell, 2003).

In these instances, the Lyceum of the Philippines University Batangas has many defined educational goals and objectives that need to be regularly addressed. In line with the university's vision, mission, Counseling and Testing Center commits itself to be the focal center of the university's holistic development of its students that will ensure their spiritual, moral and social values. Also to actively participate in promoting university image through the implementation of innovative and effective career guidance, testing programs, and dynamic student-friendly counselling services that are aimed to increase students' admission, students' satisfaction and retention rate.

Counseling and Testing Center at LPU-B has conducted exit surveys for the past five years and offered services such as counseling to enhance the student's self-awareness and assist them in handling different kinds of problems; career guidance that assist the students to have a wise decision in choosing a course suitable to their knowledge and actively participating in school to school enrolment campaign, testing services to better understand the student's strength and weaknesses, individual inventory, information service, referral and follow-up to monitor the attendance and academic status of the students, spiritual upliftment and freshmen faculty advisers to help the students to feel and experienced security and belongingness.

The researcher saw the potential utilization of the exit interview results to improve the services of LPU Batangas whose lifeblood is its students and finds ways so that it may efficiently and effectively serve its students. The objective of the paper is to discuss the efficacy of the exit survey process in LPU Batangas. Consequently, the theoretical foundations of exit interview efficacy are discussed in the literature review. Findings raise discussion questions regarding the effectiveness of information provided by the exit survey process, and furthermore lead the researcher to ask how organizational improvement can be directed with a process in place that provides applicable student feedback.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study attempted to seek the perceptions of graduating students on the academic services of LPU in terms of: appropriateness of the curriculum, teachers' capability, knowledge, skills and values earned, utilization of the knowledge, skills and values, College Dean's assistance and sufficiency of practical experiences. It also aimed to determine the perception of the graduating students on the services and support given by Academic and Non-Academic department.

METHOD

This study adopted the descriptive research method. The research aimed to discuss the efficacy of the exit survey process in LPU Batangas and determined the level of perception of graduating students upon three main areas: education, non-academic services and perceptions of the academic experience. The researcher randomly selected its respondents and was able to get 1,062 graduating seniors representing 52% of the total population in 2008; 1,143 representing 50% of the total population in 2009; 1,241 representing 50% of the total population in 2010; 1,158 representing 50% of the total population in 2011 and 1,112

representing 55% of the total population in 2012.

The instrument used to gather data is a controlled document called Exit Survey Form (FM-LPU-VPAR-16/05), a one page exit survey sheet which was filled out by the graduating students who are seeking clearance from CATC. The form is quantitative in nature, where information such as date of graduation and course are recorded. The students were asked to respond by encircling a number from a five-point Likert scale to indicate their level of agreement and satisfaction ranging from '1' strongly dissatisfied or strongly disagree to '5' strongly satisfied or strongly agree.

In order to attain the necessary data, the researcher used standardized form, FM-LPU-VPAR-16/05. The exit survey is conducted by the CATC as part of the annual department assessment activities. Typically an hour is allocated for the process, but it may last anywhere from 15 minutes to 1 hour held in a room. Part I of the survey used to aim the perception on academic services and level of satisfaction on the Academic and Non-academic services. The last part of the survey form contains a qualitative section, where the student can write comments, suggestions and recommendations for improvement of services.

Data yielded were checked, tallied and tabulated for purposes of analysis and curriculum interpretation. For in-depth treatment of data weighted mean was used with the corresponding verbal interpretation. This was used to determine the Perception of graduating students to on the extent of academic services rendered and level of satisfaction on the academic and non-academic services.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Perception of Graduating Students on the Extent of Academic Services Rendered

Table 1 presents the summary on the perceptions of graduating students on the extent of academic services rendered to them by LPU, for past five consecutive years all the respondents are Agree. Knowledge and Values utilization got the same rating of agreement with a composite mean of 4.48. It shows that the students assertively believe that they utilized the knowledge and values are gained from the college. Values earned from the course and Dean's assistance both obtained of rating with a composite mean of 4.46. It proves that the students acknowledge that their values were earned with the help of their supportive dean. Followed by Skills utilization (4.44), Knowledge earned from the course (4.41), Skills earned from the course (4.40), Teacher's capability (4.36)

and Sufficiency of true and practical experiences (4.27). Although the students are satisfied with the Teachers' capability but they ranked as second to the lowest rating, it seems that the respective teachers should helped the students to help them acquired and be equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge and values. Likewise, the colleges have to improve their On-the-Job-Training, practical and hands-on experiences.

Table 1. Perception of Graduating Students on the Extent of Academic Services Rendered

Academic Services in terms of:	Weighted Mean					CM	VI	Rank
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012			
Appropriateness of the Curricu-lum	4.5	4.41	4.51	4.45	4.48	4.47	Agree	3
Teacher's capabil-ity	4.3	4.33	4.39	4.36	4.36	4.35	Agree	9
Knowledge earned from the Course	4.4	4.40	4.47	4.45	4.41	4.43	Agree	7
Skills earned from the Course	4.4	4.33	4.49	4.40	4.38	4.40	Agree	8
Values earned from the Course	4.4	4.46	4.52	4.45	4.46	4.46	Agree	4.5
Knowledge Utili-zation	4.5	4.42	4.56	4.48	4.46	4.48	Agree	1.5
Skills Utilization	4.4	4.37	4.54	4.45	4.43	4.44	Agree	6
Values utilization	4.4	4.45	4.59	4.47	4.51	4.48	Agree	1.5
Dean's assistance	4.5	4.40	4.52	4.45	4.42	4.46	Agree	4.5
Sufficiency of true and practical experiences	4.3	4.34	4.40	4.35	4.27	4.33	Agree	10

Legend: 4.51 – 5.00 = Strongly Agree/Strongly Satisfied; 3.51 – 4.50 = Agree/Satisfied; 2.51 – 3.50 = Neither Agree or Disagree/Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied; 1.51 – 2.50 = Disagree/ Dissatisfied; 1.00 – 1.50 = Strongly Disagree/Strongly Dissatisfied

Level of Satisfaction of Respondents on the Academic and Non-Academic Services

Table 2. Summary of the Level of Satisfaction with Academic Services

I am satisfied with the academic services which I received from:	Weighted Mean					CM	VI	Rank
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012			
CATC	4.4	4.35	4.51	4.37	4.25	4.38	Satisfied	3
SLRC	4.2	4.20	4.42	4.29	4.21	4.26	Satisfied	4
College Dean	4.4	4.43	4.53	4.47	4.35	4.44	Satisfied	1
Faculty Members	4.4	4.35	4.44	4.38	4.39	4.39	Satisfied	2

Table 2 shows the level of satisfaction with the academic department. From 2007 to 2012, graduating students are Satisfied with the services given by the academic departments but College dean got the highest rating of Satisfaction with a composite mean of 4.44. It proves that they received enough support from the deans. This implies that students certainly acknowledge with the help extended by their respective deans. It also confirms that the students are satisfied with the services rendered by faculty members, rated as Satisfied by respondent's composite mean of 4.39. Likewise, Counseling and Testing Center (4.38) and SHL Learning and Resource Center (4.21), it means that the graduating students are convinced with the services rendered by these two offices. Among the group CATC and SLRC got the lowest weighted mean, it shows that the guidance counselors should continuous the dissemination of information about the CATC services that the students needs to avail like taking different kinds of psychological tests and counseling services. On the other hand, the librarian should be more accommodating to the needs of the students and continuous encouragement to use the SLRC services.

Table 3. Summary of the Level of Satisfaction on Non-Academic Services I am satisfied with the

Non-academic services I received from:	Weighted Mean					CM	VI	Rank
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012			
REGO	4.3	4.33	4.35	4.31	3.92	4.24	Satisfied	1
SMDC	3.8	3.82	4.09	4.04	4.06	3.96	Satisfied	6
CANTEEN	3.8	3.60	3.82	3.75	3.85	3.76	Satisfied	7
OOSA	4.0	4.02	4.16	4.11	4.12	4.08	Satisfied	5
ALUMNI	4.0	4.14	4.26	4.08	4.07	4.11	Satisfied	4
CASHIER	4.2	4.28	4.35	4.24	3.93	4.20	Satisfied	2
ACCOUNTING	4.2	4.34	4.37	4.29	3.77	4.19	Satisfied	3

Table 3 reveals the overall rating of graduating students on Non-academic services. Services given by Registrar's office ranked first with a composite mean of 4.24. This indicates that the graduating students receive enough support from the REGO. They also believed that the REGO keeps their records confidentially and that their rights and privileges as students are protected. The students are also satisfied with the services given by the following offices: Cashier (4.20), Accounting office (4.19), which means that they manage the accounts of the students very effectively, Alumni office (4.11), Office of Students Affairs (4.08), School Medical and Dental Clinic (3.96) it illustrates that the director of SMDC needs to address the concerns of the students on the services rendered among them and Canteen (3.76) got the lowest rating which means that the canteen needs to improve its services.

CONCLUSIONS

The graduating students confirmed that they have utilized their knowledge, skills and values during the practice of their chosen career. The college provides applicable curriculum and they received enough support from their deans and respective teachers that equipped with necessary skills, knowledge and values. The results of Non-academic satisfaction prove that the graduating students trust that the university keeps their records confidentially and manage their accounts effectively.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The university must continuously improve on all aspects of instruction and support services to ensure overall desired effects that stress competitive performance. The school needs to facilitate the convenience of the students particularly in terms of library and canteen services. There must be recommended measures for continuous improvement to come up Very Satisfactory results. The use of online services for exit survey must be included in the university's website in order to encourage students to provide more honest and accurate answers. Exit interviews maybe consistently done annually to provide work units basis for continual improvement. Data processed maybe analyzed in depth to produce desired outcomes for the benefits of the students. More follow up studies be done including other variables.

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